

WASHINGTON, D.C. Today, in the wake of a severe weather system that caused excessive rain, hail, and tornadoes resulting in numerous fatalities and structural damage to buildings, Governor Sonny Perdue declared a State of Emergency for the following second congressional district counties: Baker, Clay, Stewart, Sumter and Taylor. Congressman Sanford Bishop, representative for Georgia's Second Congressional District, issued the following statement in response to the reports of devastation and damage:

"First of all, I would like to send my heartfelt condolences to those who have lost loved ones in the wake of this storm. My wife and I, as well as my staff, will be mindful of you in our thoughts and prayers.

Early this morning, representatives from our district staff were on the scene in the affected counties to assess the situation. We have also been in touch with the Governor, GEMA, local law enforcement and health care organizations to help coordinate aid to the communities there.

Tomorrow, I will accompany President Bush as he tours the tornado-damaged areas. Additionally, 180 National Guard troops will be in the area tomorrow to assist with recovery efforts.

Most importantly, I want everyone to know that our office is available and will continue to provide assistance and the most up-to-the-minute information as this situation develops. Please do not hesitate to contact us."

Other affected second district counties include Crawford and Quitman.

Emergency Contact Information:

Congressman Bishop's Columbus Office: (706) 320-9477

Americus Command Center: (229) 928-0333

Charles Dawson, GEMA, Director of Operations: (404) 635-7001

Jonna West, GEMA, Field Coordinator: (404) 683-3339